
The Present Revisited

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Electronic version

URL: <http://journals.openedition.org/critiquedart/27137>

DOI: 10.4000/critiquedart.27137

ISBN: 2265-9404

ISSN: 2265-9404

Publisher

Groupe d'intérêt scientifique (GIS) Archives de la critique d'art

Printed version

Date of publication: 21 November 2017

Number of pages: 9-11

ISBN: 1246-8258

ISSN: 1246-8258

Electronic reference

Jean-Marc Poinot, « *The Present Revisited* », *Critique d'art* [Online], 49 | Automne/hiver 2017, Online since 21 November 2018, connection on 24 September 2020. URL : <http://journals.openedition.org/critiquedart/27137> ; DOI : <https://doi.org/10.4000/critiquedart.27137>

This text was automatically generated on 24 September 2020.

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- 1 When we are preparing a new issue of *Critique d'art*, we still have only quite a vague idea about which recent publications we shall be discussing, despite our own predictions and despite suggestions made by the members of our committees. To which our readers might well reply that we have our pet obsessions. Some of them might even be expecting us to carry on working the same loam. This said, we do try to retain a capacity for discovery and intellectual stimulation arising from the presence of books and essays waiting to be earmarked under a certain heading and looked at by editors.
- 2 The recent publications of Pauline Chevalier, Mark Cullen and Gavin Murphy, and the Villa Arson catalogue covering alternative artist-run venues thoroughly explain the summary expanded to on-line resources here proposed by Christian Besson. Similarly, the ideas of Sophie Cras about art and its values, focusing on books by Luc Boltanski, Jean-Pierre Cometti, Nathalie Heinich and Gregory Sholette, draw up a sort of inventory of knowledge, but above all of discussions under way, pending our discovery, in a coming report, of her book soon to be published by Les Presses du réel. Baptiste Brun proposes a similar inventory with regard to the relations between art and anthropology from when Hal Foster broached the matter in the mid-1990s to the catalogue devoted to diorama put out by the Palais de Tokyo. In these three articles, there is plenty of material for preparing future readings on solid foundations.
- 3 This time around, an 'exquisite corpse' has found its way into the heading "Revisiting History". In it we have chosen matchings of books which, when combined with others with no similar points, formulate a proposal of discontinuities which reveal the work carried out by time on objects and ways of describing them. Camille Paulhan navigates between, on the one side, the removals of statues proposed on the scholarly basis of the book edited by Serge Guilbaut and John O'Brian, and, on the other, the fresh quality of the catalogue devoted to Pontus Hultén and the Moderna Museet in Stockholm. In the 1960s, these latter were models of inspiration for opening drowsy French museums up to contemporary art. It also seemed well-advised to compare parallel histories written by African-American women and men in the 1970s, as discussed by Elvan Zabunyan,

when Laurence Corbel broaches two histories which culminate in or pass by way of Minimalism. Nor forgetting that the Russian Revolution produced, in tandem, both the avant-garde and realism. Closer to us and this time against the backdrop of an avant-garde-less avant-garde. Olivier Zahm has constructed an approach to things contemporary with his hopes and disillusionments as described by Julie Portier. By way of conclusion, we have 36 *Short Stories* and the proliferation of the present still attached to its experience, its brief context, its world, and its diversity. Decade after decade, here we are returning to today and its future projections.

- 4 There are many other propositions in this issue, but the last one, the essay by Clélia Zernik about contemporary art and Japan's festivals, is thoroughly novel, and a must-read. I will now let you discover it.